

## Value-Added: The Emperor with No Clothes

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**The trend to use value-added models to rate teachers and principals in New York is psychometrically indefensible.**

New York State, among many others, is racing toward the mandated implementation of a teacher and principal evaluation system based in part on something called a value-added model (VAM). In New York, the results of VAM are going to be used to make high-

But buyer beware: The validity and reliability of value-added models for rating the effectiveness of teachers, principals, and schools have been roundly rejected by almost the entire psychometric and education research community (Newton, Darling-Hammond, Haertel, & Thomas, 2010).

Before finishing this story, let me explain what value-added models can <sup>2</sup> and can't <sup>2</sup> do. In the aggregate, these models can indeed help us better understand how student, classroom, and school characteristics influence education outcomes. However <sup>2</sup> and this is crucial <sup>2</sup> when one tries to predict an *individual*

factors as the percentage of a teacher's students who live in poverty, are classified with a disability, and are English language learners. But these factors put together <sup>2</sup> along with

there's enough reasoned resistance to this rush to implement a misguided policy, the tide might turn.

New York has always been a leader in education. It should continue the highest traditions of the Empire State and point out the obvious <sup>2</sup> that using value-added models to rate teachers and principals is folly. This emperor clearly has no clothes.

## References

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